

## Message Text

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51

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 IO-13 DPW-01 AID-20

INRE-00 SSO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01 L-03 H-03

PA-03 PRS-01 USIE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSR-01 /138 W

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O R 301143Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5607

INFO WHITE HOUSE

CIA

DIA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

CINCPAC

CINCUSARPAC

CINCPACAF

CINCPACFLT

DEPCHJUSMAGTHAI

CDR USSAG NKP

CDR 13 AF ACDVON UNDORN

USDEL JEC PARIS

SECDEF

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 6033

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PGOV, PINS, PINT, PFOR, LA

SUBJECT: THE LAO CEASEFIRE - 27TH WEEK

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REF: VIENTIANE 5891

## I. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

TWENTY-SEVENTH WEEK OF CEASEFIRE IN LAOS SAW CONTINUED DECREASE IN COMBAT ACTIVITY. ONLY 11 MINOR CEASEFIRE INCIDENTS OCCURRED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. RLAF FLEW ONLY ONE STRIKE SORTIE. NO GENERAL PATTERNS WERE DISCERNABLE, AS ONLY MR-V REMAINED INCIDENT-FREE, BUT MAJORITY OF ATTACKS TOOK PLACE IN SOUTHERN LAOS (MR-III HAD 5; MR-IV, 2).

## II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. THE 27TH WEEK OF THE CEASEFIRE OFFERED SEVERAL INDICATIONS THAT RLG-LPF EFFORTS TO REACH AGREEMENT ON PROTOCOLS TO VIENTIANE ACCORD HAVE BEEN STYMIED. SOME OBSERVERS THOUGHT THAT THE RAPID CRUSHING OF THAO MA'S AUGUST 20 COUP ATTEMPT WOULD ENHANCE SOUVANNA'S BARGAINING POWER; BUT SOUVANNA'S RIGHT FLANK TOOK THE OFFENSIVE DURING THE WEEK, FORCING PRIME MINISTER ON AUGUST 29 TO THREATEN PUBLICLY TO RESIGN IF ANY "CONFLICT OR OPPOSITION ARISES" TO REACHING FINAL AGREEMENT WITH THE LPF.

2. AFTER A PROLONGED CABINET MEETING AUGUST 22, REPORTED REFTEL, AT WHICH NGON SANANIKONE EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER CERTAIN PORTIONS OF THE DRAFT PROTOCOL, THE PRIME MINISTER CALLED AN EXTRAORDINARY JOINT MEETING AUGUST 23 OF THE CABINET AND RLGA GENERALS. AT THAT MEETING, CONSERVATIVES AGAIN VOICED OPPOSITION TO THE PROTOCOL, ALTHOUGH THEY EXPRESSED LOYALTY TO SOUVANNA. IN FACE OF THIS OPPOSITION, SOUVANNA FLATERED IN HIS RESOLVE TO HAVE PROTOCOL INITIALED, EVEN THOUGH LPF NEGOTIATOR PHOUN SIPRASEUTH HAD RETURNED FROM SAM NEUA AUGUST 23 WITH AUTHORIZATION TO AGREE TO SOUVANNA'S REQUEST FOR "FINAL" CONCESSION TO RANKING OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTERS.

3. ON AUGUST 25, SOUVANNA AND LPF SENIOR NEGOTIATOR PHOUMI MET AGAIN, WITHOUT SETTLING DIFFERENCES. THEY AND OTHER RLG AND LPF LEADERS THEN TRAVELED TO LUANG PRABANG FOR ANNULA ROYAL BOAT RACE FESTIVITIES, WHERE

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FURTHER MEETINGS, BUT NO PROGRESS, TOOK PLACE.

4. INDICATIVE OF THIS STATE OF AFFAIRS WERE: (1) AN UNHELPFUL STORY IN SIENG SERI AUGUST 29, WHICH REPORTED THE ELEVEN POINTS THAT ALLEGEDLY REMAIN TO BE AGREED TO BY THE RLG AND LPF; AND (2) SOUVANNA'S SPEECH AUGUST 29 TO A GROUP OF OFFICIALS, POLICEMEN AND SOLDIERS AT WHICH HE SAID: "COMPROMISES HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE

NEGOTIATIONS. THERE IS NO VICTOR OR LOSER. IT IS ONLY THAT THE LAO PEOPLE WANT TO SINCERELY UNITE WITH EACH OTHER. THE GOVERNMENT, MYSELF IN PARTICULAR, ALWAYS REAFFIRMS THAT ANY AGREEMENT REACHED AT THE NEGOTIATIONS MUST BE WITHIN THE SCOPE OF OUR CONSTITUTION. THIS IS MY PROMISE. IF THE AGREEMENT IS NOT WITHIN THE SCOPE OF OUR CONSTITUTION, HIS MAJESTY THE KING CANNOT RATIFY IT." HE ADDED THAT, IF ANY OPPOSITION TO THE AGREEMENT AROSE, HE WAS "READY TO SUBMIT, TOGETHER WITH THIS GOVERNMENT, OUR RESIGNATION" TO THE KING.

5. COMMENT: IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER THIS PUBLIC THREAT WILL HAVE ANY IMPACT ON THE RIGHTISTS. THE MOMENTUM GATHERED IN THE TALKS TO DATE MAY BE DISSIPATING AND DELAY MAY MAKE PROSPECTS FOR AGREEMENT ON PROTOCOL RECEDE. ONLY SOUVANNA COULD BRING NEGOTIATIONS TO CONCLUSION BY MOVING FORCEFULLY TO RESOLVE THE REMAINING DIFFERENCES AND ORDERING HIS CHIEF NEGOTIATOR PHENG PHONGSAVAN TO INITIAL THE PROTOCOLS PRETTY MUCH AS THEY EXIST AT PRESENT. FOR THIS HE NEEDS THE ACQUIESCENCE OF THE ARMY.  
DEAN

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## Message Attributes

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